



Newsletter for English Teachers April 2006

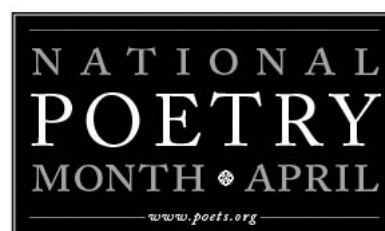
This Newsletter for English Teachers is a monthly publication by the Information Resource Centers in Germany, focusing on American Studies topics of relevance to secondary school teachers.

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NATIONAL POETRY MONTH - APRIL 2006

Inaugurated by the Academy in April 1996, National Poetry Month (NPM) brings together publishers, booksellers, literary organizations, libraries, schools, and poets around the country to celebrate poetry and its vital place in American culture. Thousands of businesses and non-profit organizations participate through readings, festivals, book displays, workshops, and other events. In April 2006, the Academy of American Poets will launch the first-ever Poetry Read-a-Thon. Geared for middle school students (grades 5-8), the Read-a-Thon's goals are to celebrate the reading of poems and writing about poems. In addition to emphasizing the pleasure and fun of reading poetry, the Read-a-Thon will facilitate the students' development of writing and comprehension skills.



- **National Poetry Almanac**, incl. "Poetry in the Movies" and "Poetry in Music":
<http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/68>
- **Online Poetry Resources**: <http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/199>
- **Glossary of Poetic Terms**: <http://www.poeticbyway.com/glossary.html>
- **A Poem a Day for American High Schools**: <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/>
- **Online Poetry Classroom**: <http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/6>
- **Poet's Corner**: http://www.gale.com/free_resources/poets/index.htm
- **Poetry Slam - FAQs**:
http://www.poetryslam.com/modules.php?name=FAQ&myfaq=yes&id_cat=1&categories=Poe+try+Slams
- **Poets Laureate of the United States**: <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/laureate.html>
- **Poetry Webcasts - Library of Congress**: <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/results.php>
- **Poetry Foundation**: <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/results.php>
- **About the USA > Literature**: <http://usa.usembassy.de/arts-literature.htm>

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE - APRIL 18TH, 2006

Today, people talk of "leaving their heart in San Francisco." But a century ago, this great city was largely destroyed by one of America's most catastrophic natural disasters.



- **Facts for Features - Census Bureau:**
http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/006580.html
- **1906 Earthquake Centennial Alliance - Teacher Resources:**
<http://1906centennial.org/teachers/resources/>
- **California Geological Survey:**
http://www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs/geologic_hazards/earthquakes/SanFrancisco_1906.htm
- **U.S. Geological Survey:** <http://quake.wr.usgs.gov/info/1906/>
- **San Francisco Virtual Museum:** <http://www.sfmuseum.org/1906/06.html>
- **San Francisco Public Library Historical Photos Collection:**
<http://sfpl.lib.ca.us/librarylocations/sfhistory/equake-browse.htm>
- **Before and After Films - Library of Congress:** <http://rs6.loc.gov/papr/sfhome.html>
- **Facts & Figures: Top 10 Lists and Maps - National Earthquake Information Center:**
<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/eqcenter/top10.php>

EARTH DAY - APRIL 22ND, 2006

Earth Day, April 22, is the annual celebration of the environment and a time to assess the work still needed to protect the natural gifts of our planet. Earth Day has no central organizing force behind it though several nongovernmental organizations work to keep track of the thousands of local events in schools and parks that mark the day. Earth Day is observed around the world, although nowhere is it a national holiday.

- **About the USA > Holidays > Arbor Day/Earth Day**
<http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/hol/celebrate.pdf>
- **About the USA > Science & Technology > Environmental Technology**
<http://usa.usembassy.de/technology-environment.htm>
- **IIP Earth Day:** http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/environment/earth_day.html
- **Earth Day Network:** <http://www.earthday.net/default.aspx>

Webchat: (see [here](#) for further information)

Market Solutions to Environmental Problems, Terry Anderson, April 13, 2006

UPDATED SOCCER INFO ON OUR WEBPAGES

Following the friendly between Germany and the U.S. on March 22nd in Dortmund, please check out highlights and player reactions, post-game comments and photos on the **U.S. Embassy soccer webpage** at: <http://worldcup2006.usembassy.de/>

Further photos and videos about the U.S. mission's diplomatic support for the USA - Poland friendly in Kaiserslautern on March 1st at:

<http://frankfurt.usconsulate.gov/frankfurt/soccer.html>

http://frankfurt.usconsulate.gov/frankfurt/pep_rally.html

HOW TO BECOME AN AMERICAN CITIZEN - "EINBÜRGERUNG AUF AMERIKANISCH"

In light of the current discussion in Germany regarding the naturalization of immigrants, we'd like to illustrate efforts by the United States to integrate new citizens. As part of the Department of Homeland Security the Office of Citizenship is mandated by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to promote instruction and training on citizenship rights and responsibilities and to provide immigrants with information and tools necessary to successfully integrate into American civic culture. Its primary focus lies on providing information and resources to immigrants at two key points in their journey towards civic integration: when they first become permanent residents and when they are ready and eligible to begin the formal naturalization process.

- **Office of Citizenship:** <http://uscis.gov/graphics/citizenship/index.htm>
- **Learn about the United States - Quick Civics Lessons** (Flash Cards in various formats):
<http://uscis.gov/graphics/citizenship/flashcards/index.htm>
Immigrants applying for naturalization can use these flash cards as a study tool to prepare for the naturalization test and teachers and volunteers can use these flash cards in the classroom.
- **Welcome Guide for New Immigrants**
<http://uscis.gov/graphics/citizenship/welcomeguide/index.htm>
This comprehensive guide contains practical information to help immigrants settle into everyday life in the United States, as well as basic civics information that introduces new immigrants to the U.S. system of government. Welcome to the United States also gives new immigrants tips on how to get involved in their new communities, and how to meet their responsibilities and exercise their rights as permanent residents.
- **Faces of America - A Tribute to Citizenship**
<http://uscis.gov/graphics/publicaffairs/faces.htm>
Video: <http://uscis.gov/graphics/media/Faces.mpg>
This video highlights the 230 years of America's history as a nation of immigrants. To view this video you must save the file directly to your computer using "right-click" and "Save As" on Windows systems (Warning: MPG, 35MB)
- **Helping Immigrants Become New Americans**
<http://uscis.gov/graphics/citizenship/focusgroup.pdf> (26p)
A report on community efforts to promote immigrant integration, September 2004

Background:

- **About the USA > Society> A Nation of Immigrants:**
<http://usa.usembassy.de/society.htm>

- **About the USA > Society > Census & Demographics:**
<http://usa.usembassy.de/society-demographics.htm>
- **Naturalizations in the U.S. 2004** (Office of Immigration Statistics)
<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/publications/NaturalizationFlowReport2004.pdf> (4p)

Webchats on Diversity in the United States (see [here](#) for further information)

- **Young Muslim Life in America**, Tina Kareema Dauod, March 30, 2006
- **How "American" is American Culture**, Dr. Richard Pells, April 20, 2006

RECENT ARTICLES

The Great 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire

Niderost, Eric. American History, April 2006, online edition

"In the spring of 1906 San Francisco was a city boasting 410,000 inhabitants -- a world-class metropolis whose citizens, at the dawn of a new century, looked forward with a sense of civic pride and growing confidence...The massive earthquake that shook San Francisco to its core in the early hours of April 18, 1906, ignited a howling blaze that threatened total destruction of the city. Action intended to save the city may have added to the chaos, injuries, deaths and damage." The article features more than 10 photos showing the effects of the earthquake on San Francisco.

<http://www.thehistorynet.com/ah/bl-san-francisco-earthquake/>

What's Great About America

D'Souza, Dinesh. Heritage Foundation, February 23, 2006

"Is America worthy of a reflective patriotism that doesn't mindlessly assert, 'My country, right or wrong,' but rather examines the criticisms of America and finds them wanting? As an immigrant who has chosen to become an American citizen, I believe that it is. Having studied the criticisms of America with care, my conclusion is that the critics have a narrow and distorted understanding of America. They exaggerate American faults, and they ignore what is good and even great about America." In this essay D'Souza aims at refuting current critics of the United States and showing the virtues of the country. Dinesh D'Souza is the Robert and Karen Rishwain Scholar at the Hoover Institution. <http://www.heritage.org/Research/PoliticalPhilosophy/fp1.cfm>

The State of the News Media 2006 - Annual Report on American Journalism

Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2006

"For two years, we [Project for Excellence in Journalism] have tracked in this report the major trends in the American news media. What is occurring, we have concluded, is not the end of journalism that some have predicted. But we do see a seismic transformation in what and how people learn about the world around them. Power is moving away from journalists as gatekeepers over what the public knows. Citizens are assuming a more active role as assemblers, editors and even creators of their own news. Audiences are moving from old media such as television or newsprint to new media online. Journalists need to redefine their role and identify which of their core values they want to fight to preserve —something they have only begun to consider."

<http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.com/2006/index.asp>

Read more at InfoAlert: <http://infoalert.usembassy.de>

InfoAlert highlights recent articles and reports from leading U.S. journals and policy sources and provides informed commentary on international and domestic issues. To register for a password, please contact us at infoalert.de@state.gov.

WEB SUGGESTIONS

Big Dog's Grammar – A Bare Bones Guide to English

Follow Big Dog through this grammar site for older students, as he sniffs out dangling modifiers, parallel structures, comma splices, active and passive constructions, and many other grammar topics that often trip writers. There is a quick guide to the MLA guidelines for proper citations and how to avoid plagiarism. Try the self-tests that quiz you on the topics. This is an entertaining method of presenting some difficult grammar rules in a clear manner. <http://aliscot.com/bigdog/>

Wired for Books

For many years, most of the best writers of the English language found their way to Don Swaim's CBS Radio studio in New York. The one-on-one interviews typically lasted 30 to 45 minutes and then had to be edited down to a two-minute radio show. Wired for Books is proud to make these important oral documents publicly available for the first time in their entirety. Listen to the voices of many of the greatest writers of the twentieth century.

<http://www.wiredforbooks.org/index.html> and <http://www.wiredforbooks.org/swaim/> (A-Z)

This American Life

Since Chicago Public Radio's own "This American Life" radio program debuted in 1995, it has garnered a great deal of critical acclaim, both for its straight-ahead approach to crafting a narrative and for its diverse set of guest commentators, which include Sarah Vowell and David Sedaris, among others. Visitors to the site can learn about the show's host, Ira Glass on the "Staff" section, then proceed to the "Our Favorites" area to get a sense of what the show is all about. Some of the episodes featured here include the story of the people who come in and out of Chicago diner in a 24-hour period and the rather complex story that surrounded a yacht that supposedly belonged to Adolf Hitler. Of course, visitors can listen to all of these programs here in their archive, along with many others. <http://www.thislife.org/> [Real Player]

Teachers Network

Based in New York, the Teachers Network is an alliance of education professionals dedicated to disseminating best-practices throughout the world of public school education. On the homepage, visitors can click through a selection of lesson plans, essays by current teachers on their own experiences, and also read a list of grants available to those working in a number of disciplines, including social studies, language arts, and the sciences. The "How To" area is one that will be most helpful to new teachers, as it provides resources on managing a classroom, working with students' families, and teaching literacy. The lesson plans area includes a nice search feature which allows users to search by subject and grade level, along with offering them the option to view the most popular teacher-created lesson plans. For educators and those with an interest in researching the realm of curriculum and instruction, this website is a real find. <http://www.teachnet.org/>

WEB CHATS WITH U.S. EXPERTS

March 30, 2006. 16:00 (15:00 GMT)

"Young Muslim Life in America", with Tina Kareem Dauod

The close of women's history month provides the backdrop for IIP's continued discussion of women's issues with a webchat featuring Kareema Dauod speaking on life in America as a Muslim woman and her efforts to help create a dialogue and foster understanding between Americans and Muslims worldwide.

More info: http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/USINFO/Products/Webchats/dauod_03_30_2006.html

April 13, 2006. 18:00 (17:00 GMT)

"Market Solutions to Environmental Problems", with Terry Anderson

How can a free market help save the environment? Join research scholar Terry Anderson for a webchat on how market incentives can encourage individuals to protect the environment and how private property rights encourage stewardship of resources. Anderson, executive director of the Political Economy Research Center and a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, will be available to answer questions and discuss market solutions for environmental problems.

More info:

http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/USINFO/Products/Webchats/anderson_apr_13_2006.html

April 20, 2006. 18:00 (17:00 GMT)

"How "American" is American Culture", with Dr. Richard Pells

Just as McDonalds, Disneyland and American culture shape the world's entertainment and tastes, foreign intellectual and artistic influences greatly shape America. Richard Pells, a professor of history at the University of Texas, believes that global culture is a two-way street, and that America receives as much as it exports. Pells will be available to answer questions and discuss how the world and in particular European culture have affected American culture and way of life over the past century.

More info: http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/USINFO/Products/Webchats/pells_apr_20_2006.html

Further IIP Webchats: <http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 10, 2006. 15:00 - 16:00

Webchat: Studying and Working in the U.S.

Questions relating to studying, working or seeking internships in the U.S. will be answered by experts from the Public Affairs/Information Resource Center and Consular sections.

More info: <http://www.usembassy.de/germany/chat.html>

May 11, 2006. 18:00 - 19:30

Studying in the United States

Zentralbibliothek Köln, am Neumarkt

Petra Spitz from the IRC's Educational Information Service will talk about studying and working in the United States, followed by a Question and Answer session. <http://www.stbib-koeln.de/index1.htm>

More info on exchange opportunities at <http://www.usembassy.de/germany/exchanges/index.html>

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Wir nehmen Ihre Anregungen gerne auf.